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of the peach, pear and apple, which vary so much in their hardiness? Every fruit grower in the Northern States knows well that certain varieties of these trees will endure the winter while others will not. This may not be due to any adaptation to cold, but it certainly does not admit of the simple explanation given by the learned author. There have certainly been variations in the hardiness of cultivated plants, and these variations have, by judicious selection, made it possible for us to extend very considerably the range of the species.—*Charles E. Bessey.*

OUR LIVING WORLD.—Under this title Mr. Selmar Hess, of New York, is publishing in forty-two quarto numbers a popular work on natural history, which will be welcomed by young people on account of the abundant and showy illustrations.

The text is based on Rev. J. G. Wood's, and is anecdotal rather than scientific; it has been adapted for American readers by Dr. J. B. Holder. The wood-cuts are those which have appeared in Wood's book, also in Brehm's *Thierleben*, while the colored plates are oleographs reproduced by Prang from the exquisite chromo-lithographs of the great work of Brehm.

As a picture book of the animal creation, particularly of the vertebrates, it will prove attractive. The accompanying illustration of that strange animal the Capybara, the "native hog" of South America, the largest of existing rodents, will give an idea of the kind of illustrations used in the numbers we have thus far received. While, then, not specially authoritative or American in its plan or authorship, we doubt not that it will be welcomed by many as a readable "natural history."

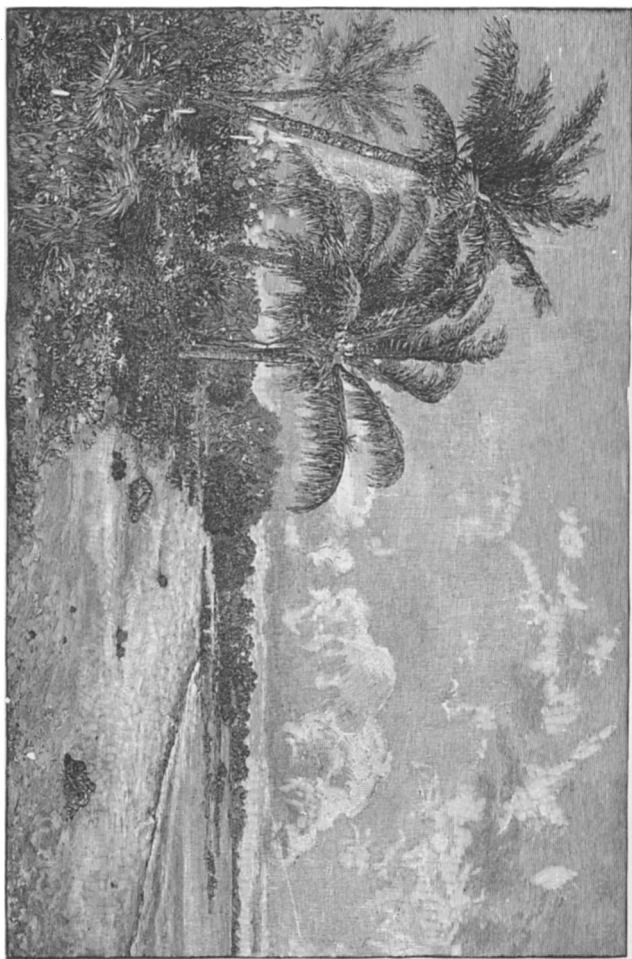
As respects the classification adopted, the arrangement should be such as is generally followed by modern zoölogists. To place the marsupials between the land Carnivora and the seals is a violation of the simplest principles of classification. The Insectivora and bats are placed too near the primates, although it should be said that the position of these groups is in dispute.

The work will be issued in forty-two parts of forty-eight pages at fifty cents a part; it will contain forty-two oleographs and eighty-four full-page wood engraving. The paper and press-work are excellent.

MEMOIRS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.—The third volume of the National Academy appeared in 1884 from the Government printing office. It is a quarto volume of 262 pages, and contains four memoirs read before the academy in 1884, under the following titles: Report of the Eclipse expedition to Caroline island, May, 1883; Experimental determination of wavelengths in the invisible prismatic spectrum, by Professor S. P. Langley; On the subsidence of particles in liquids, by Professor W. H. Brewer; On the formation of a deaf variety of the human



Vegetation on Caroline Island.



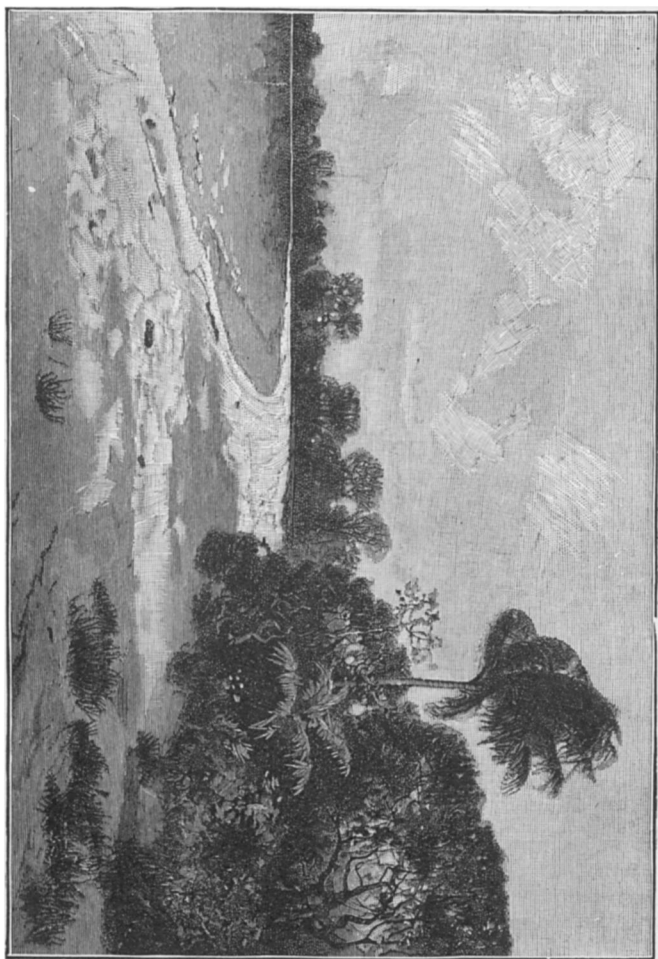
View on Caroline Island.

race, by A. Graham Bell. The greater part of the volume is devoted to the report of the eclipse expedition, the interest of which is enhanced by the photographs reproduced in its pages.

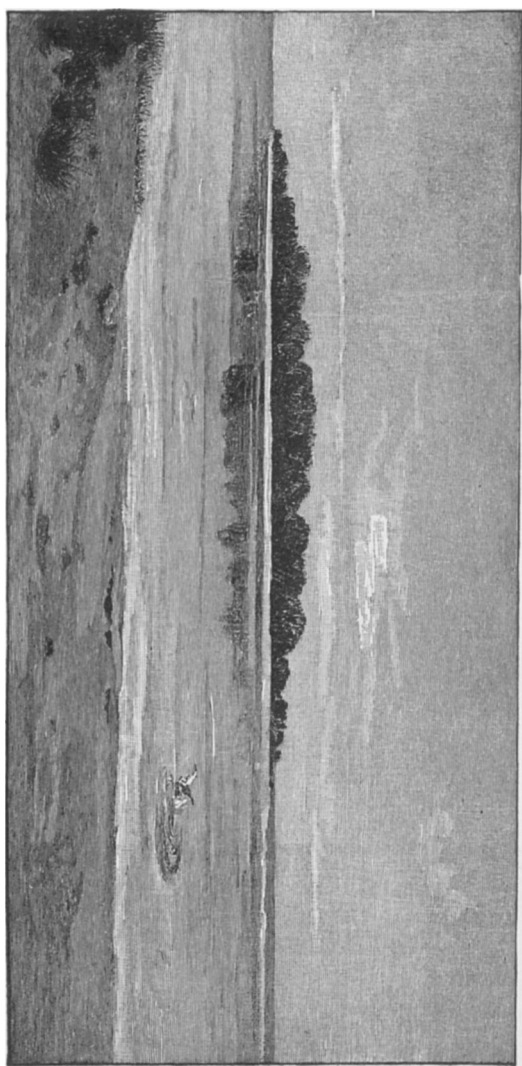
Caroline island is a genuine atoll, of the type described by Darwin and Dana; while the frontispiece gives a bird's-eye view of the low circular island, the four accompanying illustrations will convey an idea of the scenery of a Pacific atoll. The surface of the island is covered with palms and undergrowth, including a large number of young cocoa palms planted by the owners of the island, who keep a few people on the island to cultivate them. Beside the eclipse and other physical data, the botany of the island is described by Dr. W. S. Dixon, U.S.N., and Professor W. Trelease; Dr. Dixon also adds notes on the zoölogy of the island. The few butterflies have been named by Messrs. Arthur Butler and H. Stricker. The whole presents an interesting monograph of an atoll. Plates XXVIII-XXXI are from electrotypes of four of the views taken on the island.

DR. KRAUSS' SLAVIC CUSTOMS.—In his latest publication, the ethnologist Dr. Friedr. S. Krauss has taken up the subject of the tribal and family relations, of domestic life, courtship, marriage, married life, divorce, adoption, widowhood and hospitality among the Southern Slavs of the Balkan peninsula. From the title, "*Sitte und Gebrauch der Südslaven*" (Customs and uses among Southern Slavs)¹ we would certainly expect a full treatment of other subjects of popular life, also, as of legal customs, agriculture, pastoral pursuits, etc., included in the volume; but what is offered is so well marked with the stamp of learning and thoroughness that we do not grudge with the author for the rest, expecting to find it in subsequent volumes. The work was undertaken in 1883 under the auspices of the Vienna Anthropological Society, and carried out through the munificence of Baron Ferd. von Andrian-Werburg. A considerable literature already exists on the subject, as may be collected from the preface of another important work of Krauss (on the Folklore of Southern Slavs, a serial, of which two volumes have hitherto appeared), but the author is perfectly independent of his predecessors, has himself visited a large portion of the countries described, and speaks several of their dialects. The "Customs" are interspersed with many quotations from Slavic poets and from popular poems, of which the authors are unknown, sometimes also with quotations from the original languages. But he avoids on purpose ethnologic comparisons with facts taken from non-Slavic especially non-European institutions, as the conditions under which they originated may not always be the same as the ones observed at home. It is interesting to see how the tribe of the

¹ *Sitte und Brauch der Südslaven. Nach heimischen gedruckten und ungedruckten quellen, von Dr. F. S. Krauss. Wien, 1885. A. Hölder, publisher. 8vo, xxvi and 681 pages.*



View on Caroline Island.



Part of Caroline Island.